



Med-Alert

The 5th Brigade (HS) Newsletter

December 2001
Volume 22



THE COLONEL'S CORNER

HOLIDAY MESSAGE

This is the time of year that we reflect on the past and look forward to the future. After the events of September 11, we have even more reason to pause and appreciate that we are Americans. Your service helps provide the freedom that we hold dear and are able to enjoy this holiday season.

I wish each of you a safe and happy holiday.

FROM THE S-1

I wanted to take a minute to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. Please take care if you are traveling and allow extra time to get places if you are flying. We want to see everyone safely back to work following the holidays.

(Source: CPT Lehman, Asst. S1)

FROM THE S-3 AND SSA

91W TRANSITION - The 5th Brigade (HS), 95th Division (IT) continues to be at the forefront for USAR 91W transition courses. We are currently scheduled to start teaching NR EMT/B in 9 locations between now and January 02. The locations are: San Antonio, El Paso, Omaha, Oklahoma City, Austin, Albuquerque, Little Rock, Ft Leonard Wood and Iowa City. By mid-02 we will expand to Houston, Dallas, and New Orleans. All units in the brigade are contributing instructors and knowledge, especially since the mobilization of 10th Battalion instructors. Transition is not only EMT courses, it also involves, Trauma AIMS and PHTLS, which are being taught by the PND. The 3457th MTC will teach the EMT Bridge course in the near future.

Every soldier in the 5th Brigade who is a 91B/C should have already taken the courses to transition, if you have not, ask your chain of command to enroll you in the necessary course to become a fully transitioned 91W.

PROMOTION BOARDS - The Senior Enlisted Promotion Boards dates for both RSCs have been published and will be conducted in January and February 02. Our Brigade alone will advertise 37 vacancies. This means that across both RSC there will be many slots to be filled. The key is to put a professional packet that will sell the soldier to the board, spend time reviewing the packet, send the most updated information, and have all records checked.

AKO ARMY KNOWLEDGE ONLINE ACCOUNT - Every soldier, reservist and Army civilian is now required to have an Army Knowledge Online account by October 1, 2001. Obviously the deadline has already passed so this message is more of a reminder. It is very simple to register, just go to www.army.mil and find the link that says army knowledge online and follow the instructions to get an account.

DRILL ACTIVITIES - One of the major reasons for soldiers leaving their units and the USAR is the inability of the chain of command to provide them with a framework in which they can be productive during drills. It starts with accountability, if the NCOIC and OIC don't even care whether the soldier is in the unit then why should the soldier even bother to show up. Next we as leaders need to make sure that each and every soldier has an assignment that is appropriate and that contributes to the overall accomplishment of the unit's mission, again this requires chain of command involvement at the lowest level. How many of you NCOICs and OICs will have task lists for every soldier in your section to do over drill??? Keep your soldiers gainfully employed and they will stay in the unit.

90-DAY EVENT CALENDAR

December

1 st - 2 nd	5 th Brigade Logistics Conference
1 st	Yearly Strategic Briefing Rehearsals
1 st - 2 nd	Project Management Workshop
8 th - 9 th	All Units Drill
8 th - 9 th	Yearly Strategic Briefing Rehearsal
25 th	Christmas Holiday



January

1 st	New Years Holiday
12 th – 13 th	All units drill
22 nd – 25 th	Mobilization Course
25 th – 26 th	YSB to Division

SGLI SPOUSAL 'OPT-OUT' DEADLINE EXTENDED TO DECEMBER 31

Troops who don't want spousal coverage in the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program now have until Dec. 31 to cancel at no charge. This is a one-month extension on the initial Nov. 30 opt-out deadline widely reported in October.

New rules effective Nov. 1 provide SGLI participants with free \$10,000 coverage per child and low-cost spousal coverage of up to \$100,000.

Service members with personal SGLI coverage of \$100,000 or more are automatically enrolled for the maximum \$100,000 spousal coverage, said Navy Capt. Chris Kopang, DoD director of compensation. The accompanying premium will be deducted from military pay each month.

Spouse's coverage can be no higher than the member's, and so is limited if the member carries less than \$100,000 personal coverage, he explained. Spouse coverage must be elected in \$10,000 increments. Premiums are based on coverage and the spouse's age.

Spouse's age	Rate per \$1,000	Maximum Monthly Premium
Under 35	\$.09	\$9
35-44	\$.13	\$13
45-49	\$.20	\$20
50-54	\$.32	\$32
55+	\$.55	\$55

Coverage for children up to age 18, or 23 if a fulltime student, is free and automatic, so long as the member participates in SGLI, Kopang said. Eligible Reserve component members receive the same family-member coverage with premiums being deducted from their drill pay, he said.

But what if service members don't want spousal SGLI coverage? No problem -- opt out of the Veterans Administration-sponsored coverage.

Kopang said troops who don't want spousal SGLI coverage need to visit their military personnel office to fill out and submit an "8286A" form.

The forms are also available on the VA Web site: www.insurance.va.gov/sglivgli/sglifam.htm.

Those who cancel in time will be reimbursed for any premiums inadvertently withheld from their pay.

(Source: Gerry J. Gilmore, Americans Forces Press Service)

TRICARE CHANGES MEAN LOWER HEALTHCARE COSTS FOR RESERVISTS

DoD officials have enacted healthcare system changes to make life a little easier for reserve component members and their families following the Noble Eagle/Enduring Freedom call-up to active duty.

The most significant change is a national demonstration project that waives all TRICARE deductibles for family members of Noble Eagle/Enduring Freedom activated reservists and guardsmen for care received since Sept. 14.

TRICARE officials realized many of these families probably paid deductibles for their civilian health plans earlier in the year. They didn't feel it fair for them to shoulder another financial burden just because their sponsor was called up toward the end of the year, said Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Robert Styron, regional operations officer for the TRICARE Management Activity.

Another change for reserve component members is that TRICARE will pay for up to 115 percent of what is usually allowed for care under existing guidelines. Styron said the change would help reservists who live far from active military facilities in areas that don't have TRICARE provider networks. Their families probably would end up paying more out-of-pocket if TRICARE hadn't agreed to the higher fees.

The third change is that TRICARE officials have waived the need for Guard and Reserve family members to obtain nonavailability statements before receiving care from a civilian provider. Styron said DoD acknowledges many reserve families have existing relationships with civilian providers.

"If you've already got these established relationships with a provider, we're not going to get in the way. We



will allow you to continue seeing providers you know." he said.

Active duty family members don't need a nonavailability statement if they're far from a military treatment facility. If they live near a military facility, however, they generally need the statement or they must pay for the care themselves.

DoD officials have explained that families of reserve component members called up for at least 30 days are eligible to use TRICARE benefits. Families of those activated for at least 179 days are also eligible to enroll in TRICARE Prime, which offers the most cost-effective way for military families to receive medical care.

For more information on these new benefits and on healthcare for reservists and guardsmen, visit TRICARE for the reserve components at: www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/default.htm.

(Source: Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service)

95TH DIVISION (IT) SONG COMPETITION

During World War II one of the soldiers of the 95th Division wrote a verse and chorus, which became the Division song. These words have stayed with the Division over the years and were appropriate to the time and events of the war and those we were fighting.

The song is as follows:

Verse:

We'll battle the Japs and Hitler's men, too;
They can't stop us now whatever they do.
Wherever we go a far away shore,
The Ninety-Fifth is fighting hard to help us win this war!

Chorus:

The Ninety-Fifth marches on!
We'll fight until we have won.
"Do or die," is our battle cry,
We will keep our foe on the run!
The Ninety-Fifth marches on!
To keep America free;
For we will fight with all our might
Til we gain full victory!

MG Silverthorn would like each of you to provide this song to your soldiers and have them write a second

verse to the song more relevant to current times and the situation in today's world. He would like to have at least one entry from each brigade and the suspense for that action is to arrive at this headquarters NLT 1 Apr 01. The entries will be boarded and a verse picked prior to the Strategic Leadership Conference to be held 26-28 Apr 01. The winning verse will be announced at the conference.

Entries will be mailed (e-mailed) to this headquarters ATTN: Command Section (Major Branch).

POC is Major Lacy Branch (405) 419-8370.

(Source: COL Donald D. Meyer, Chief of Staff, 95th Division (IT))

YOUR CHAIN OF COMMAND

5th Brigade (HS)

COL Angel Padilla CSM Alfred Habelman

10th Battalion

MAJ James Hickey Vacant

3457th

LTC Floyd Priester CSM Blanca Ramirez

Practical Nurse Detachment

MAJ Mary Gomez Vacant

HHD – 5th Brigade (HS)

CPT Mario Avila MSG Dan Carlin